

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13
AID-05 /074 W
-----271358Z 066315 /43
R 271115Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5810
INFO AMEMBASSY RABAT

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, AG
SUBJECT: ALGERIAN NATIONAL POPULAR ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

REF: ALGIERS 0182

1. WITH NINE DAYS TO GO UNTIL FEB 4 NATIONAL POPULAR ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, MOST DISTRICTS (DAIRAS) THROUGHOUT COUNTRY REPORTED TO HAVE FINISHED INITIAL SELECTION OF CONDIDATES. THIS PROCESS WAS CONDUCTED IN EACH PROVINCE (WILAYA) UNDER SUPERVISION OF A MINISTER OR OTHER HIGH OFFICIAL. THESE MEN ARE NOW RETURNING TO ALGIERS, AFTER TWO-WEEK ABSENCE, BEARING RESULTS OF DELIBERATIONS. BASIC VOTING UNITS APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN ASSEMBLIES OF FLN SECTIONS (KASMAS) OF WHICH THERE ARE SEVERAL PER DAIRA.

2. FINAL STAGE OF SCREENING WILL BE CONDUCTED BY NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION MADE UP OF COUNCILS OF REVOLUTION AND MINISTERS AND PRESUMABLY MASS ORGANIZATION AND ARMY REPRESENTATIVES. NATIONAL COMMISSION WILL REDUCE NUMBER OF CANDIDATES FOR EACH ASSEMBLY SEAT FROM THE FOUR SUBMITTED BY EACH DAIRA TO TWO.

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3. LIMITED NUMBER OF DISCUSSIONS WE HAVE HAD WITH KNOWLEDGEABLE PERSONS ON ELECTIONS SUGGESTS FOLLOWING CONCLUSIONS:

A. POSTPONEMENT A POSSIBILITY: ALTHOUGH MOST DAIRA-LEVEL CONSULTATIONS APPEAR COMPLETE, ALL RESULTS OF THESE DELIBERATIONS APPARENTLY NOT IN.

THUS, QUESTIONABLE THAT NATIONAL COMMISSION WILL BE ABLE TO COMPLETE ITS WORK IN TIME TO PERMIT FINAL LISTS OF CANDIDATES TO BE PUBLISHED FOR FEB 4 DEADLINE. OFFICIAL MEDIA ALREADY SAYING THAT CONSULTATION WITH "MASSES" WILL TAKE PLACE "DURING FEBRUARY," AND DIPLOMATIC SOURCES REPORTING RUMORS THAT POSTPONEMENT IS IN OFFING.

B. SMALL PARTICIPATION IN SELECTION PROCESS:
CONTRARY TO INDICATIONS GIVEN IN MEDIA, WE HAVE IMPRESSION THAT NUMBER OF PERSONS PARTICIPATING IN SONSULTATIONS AT DAIRA-KASMA LEVEL HAS BEEN SMALL. WOULD APPEAR THAT ONLY KASMA ASSEMBLIES, AND PERHAPS MASS ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVES, PARTICIPATED IN INITIAL VOTING ON CNDIDATES. IN ONE DAIRA, THIS MEANT THAT RATIO OF VOTERS TO CANDIDATES CHOSEN WAS ONLY ABOUT FIVE TO ONE. IN OTHER WORDS, SELECTION PROCES BEING LIMITED TO REASONABLY SMALL FLN ELITE.

C. CNDIDATES NOTE WELL KNOWN: OUR IMPRESSION CONTINUES TO BE THAT CANDIDATES WILL BE PERSONS WITHOUT NATIONAL REPUTATION. IN CASE OF DAIRA CITED IN B ABOVE, ALL CHOSEN WERE MEMBERS OF KASMA ASSEMBLIES.

D. MINISTERIAL CLOUT CONSIDERABLE: AS MIGHT BE EXPECTED, MINISTER OR OTHER HIGH OFFICIAL IN CHARGE OF PROVINCIAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION SEEMS TO HAVE HAD MAJOR SAY AS TO WHICH CANDIDATES FINALLY CHOSEN FOR CONSIDERATION AT NATIONAL LEVEL. IN DAIRA MENTIONED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ABOVE, FOR EXAMPLE, NUMBER OF CANDIDATES WAS INITIALLY TOO LARGE AND WAS REDUCED TO REQUIRED LEVEL ON MINISTER'S INSTRUCTION, ALBEIT AFTER CONSULTATION WAS KASMA REPRESENTATIVES.

5. TO SUM UP, FLN APPEARS TO BE CALLING TUNE IN ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, BUT IMPRESSION REMAINS THAT NEW BODY DESTINED FOR POLITICAL OBSCURITY.LYNE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770029-0970
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From: ALGIERS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770114/aaaaamdn.tel
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Litigation Code IDs:
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Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 ALGIERS 182
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3490555
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ALGERIAN NATIONAL POPULAR ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS
TAGS: PINT, AG
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/6bd338d0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009